

ACTION STEPS FOR THE WEEK	
Monday  Action Step 1	
Tuesday  Action Step 2	
Wednesday  Action Step 3	
Thursday  Action Step 4	
Friday  Action Step 5	
Saturday  Action Step 6	
My biggest area for prayer and work this week	

DAILY DEVOTIONS FOR:

## THE GAMES WE PLAY (Part 2)



*"For God can use sorrow in our lives to help us turn away from sin and seek salvation. We will never regret that kind of sorrow..."*  
 ~ 2 Corinthians 7:10a

## MONDAY

### READ: 2 Corinthians 7

When my son, Kyle, was little we used to play the board game *Sorry!* quite regularly. Being a fairly competitive person, I must confess that this game really annoyed me sometimes. If you are not familiar with this game, the object is to get your four colored pawns from “Start” to “Home.” Now, you do not move around the board by rolling dice, rather you move by pulling cards which state how many spaces you can go. Hidden in this deck of cards, however, are several *Sorry!* cards which give your competitors a chance to send one of your pawns all the way back to start. I can tell you it is pretty frustrating to have your last pawn nearing “Home” only to have someone pull out that *Sorry!* card!

You know when I played this game with Kyle, he sure didn’t seem “sorry” to pull that card and send me back to start. In fact, he seemed pretty pleased about the whole thing!

1. Have you ever had an experience with someone when you knew that he/she should have been sorry for something but was not? How did that make you feel?
2. How do you think God feels when we should be sorry about things we have done that have offended Him and others but are not?
3. What is the benefit of true sorrow according to verses 9-11?
4. Is there anything you need to give in repentance to God?

### PRAYER

- ◆ Thank God for His forgiveness and His work in your life
- ◆ Confess to God, if necessary, any unrepentant action, thought, or word
- ◆ Ask God to help you have a spirit that is sensitive to things that grieve His Spirit
- ◆ Ask God to help you offer forgiveness freely to others

## SATURDAY

### READ: Luke 6:37-42; Colossians 3:10-17

Someone once said, “If you feel that you have no faults, that makes another one.”

My wife will tell you that I could teach a class called “Fault Finding 101,” as I have the highly irritating ability to find faults with *many, many* things! The problem for those of us with such underappreciated ability is that it seems to only be effective externally and not effective internally. That is, I, and those like myself, don’t have problems finding faults in things outside ourselves, yet we seem to have great difficulty finding faults *inside* ourselves.

Fortunately, since my son has become a teen-ager, he is more than happy to bring to light all my many flaws and faults!

1. Would you say that you are a “fault-finder?” Why or why not?
2. What does Jesus say about this in Luke 6?
3. What does Paul say about this in Colossians 3:13,14?
4. Certainly, there are times when we will need to speak to others about their actions and attitudes. But, why is it always good to remember your own “eye-planks” before you do?

### PRAYER

- ◆ Thank God for His Spirit who works to reveal your areas of weakness, so that you can deal with them
- ◆ Confess to God, if necessary, worrying about other people’s issues more than you worry about your own
- ◆ Ask God to help you focus on yourself before you concern yourself with the faults of others

## FRIDAY

### READ: Matthew 6:9-15; Matthew 18:21-35

In the 1730's, John and Charles Wesley were serving as missionaries in the southern colonies of America. Traveling through what is now known as Georgia, the governor, General Oglethorpe, was lashing out at a servant and threatening severe harm.

The trembling servant begged forgiveness. In harsh tones, the General responded, "I never forgive!" He was about to unleash even more, when the voice of John Wesley rose up behind him. He simply said, "If you never forgive, then I hope, sir, that you never sin." The General felt the force of those words, as he coupled them with the words of Jesus who said, "If you refuse to forgive others, your Father will not forgive your sins."

1. How does the saying, "He that can't forgive others, breaks the bridge over which he must pass himself" go along with our Scripture for today?
2. What happened to the servant who refused to forgive after having been forgiven so much himself?
3. Do you have unforgiveness in your heart toward anyone?
4. If you answered "yes," what will you do to rectify this situation?

### PRAYER

- ◆ Thank God for His forgiveness of your many sins
- ◆ Confess to God, if necessary, harboring resentment and unforgiveness toward another
- ◆ Ask God to help you forgive others as you have been forgiven
- ◆ Ask God to help you resolve any issues you may have with another

## TUESDAY –JULY 12th

### READ: Hebrews 12:14-29

If you are a parent, you will be very familiar with what I am about to share. Being a parent and foster-parent of 28 children, I have experienced an interesting fact about human nature. Here is that fact: Children are often *not* sorry about something until they get caught and the consequences are meted out.

Too many times to count, I have had children do or say something wrong, and I would issue a warning. Within a short period of time, it happened again. This time, there was no warning. There were consequences. Tears in their eyes, these children would blubber about how sorry they were and beg for another chance free of consequences...but they were barking up the wrong tree!

Of course, we know this isn't just true of kids. Many of us tend to keep up a certain behavior until finally the consequences hit and hit hard. Then, we wish we had done things differently, but it is too late.

1. Can you think of a time in your life, or in your family, where repentance came too late to avoid consequences? What was it?
2. How was this true with Esau in our Scripture today?
3. How was this true with the disobedient Israelites in the wilderness according to our Scripture today?
4. What can help you avoid "the consuming fire" of God's consequences?

### PRAYER

- ◆ Thank God for consequences He gives to teach us lessons
- ◆ Confess to God, if necessary, an attitude that says, "I will wait until I get caught to change."
- ◆ Ask God to help you live in submission to His way and will
- ◆ Ask God to help you honor Him with your life

## WEDNESDAY

### READ: Jeremiah 36

There's a story of a farmer and his beloved pet pig. Each day, the big pig would forage under the oak tree looking for acorns. Knowing that acorns could cause harm to his pet's sensitive stomach, he implored his pink, plump friend to stay away from the tree. Yet, each day, back went the pig to the oak tree, and each day the farmer would gently guide the pig away.

Finally, the farmer told his pig, "Listen, I love you, my friend. Because I do, I cannot allow this to continue. If you do not stop eating these acorns, I will have to chop down this tree."

With a snort and a stomp, the pig replied, "Well, what do I care about that tree?!? I am after the acorns."

1. How do we see both the farmer's patience and the farmer's judgment in this little story?
2. How do we see both God's patience and judgment in our Scripture for today?
3. What was the response of the king to God's call of repentance in verse 24? What was God's response to this in verses 28-31?
4. How would have some godly sorrow from Jehoiakim changed this story?
5. How can godly sorrow positively affect your life story?

### PRAYER

- ◆ Thank God for His love and patience
- ◆ Confess, if necessary, ignoring God's warnings
- ◆ Ask God to help you have an open heart to His promptings and guidance
- ◆ Pray for your life to be marked by godly sorrow

## THURSDAY

### READ: 2 Kings 22:1–23:8

Charles Hodge wrote, "The sure test of the quality of any supposed change of heart will be found in its permanent effects. 'By their fruits you shall know them' is as applicable to the right method of judging ourselves as of judging others. Whatever, therefore, may have been our inward experience, whatever joy or sorrow we may have felt, unless we bring forth fruits meet for repentance, our experience will profit us nothing. Repentance is incomplete unless it leads to confession and restitution in cases of injury; unless it causes us to forsake not merely outward sins, which others notice, but those which lie concealed in the heart; unless it makes us choose the service of God and live not for ourselves but for Him. There is no duty which is either more obvious in itself, or more frequently asserted in the Word of God, than that of repentance."

1. Can you think of a time when someone told you they were sorry with their words, but their actions sure didn't seem to be saying sorry?
2. What did King Josiah realize he and his people were guilty of?
3. How did he show his repentance?
4. What was God's response to Josiah's true repentance?
5. How can you show God that you are truly sorry for sin?

### PRAYER

- ◆ Thank God for His power to forgive and erase sin
- ◆ Confess to God, if necessary, saying sorry with words but NOT showing you are truly sorry with actions
- ◆ Ask God to help you live by the fruit of repentance
- ◆ Ask God to help your words match your actions